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GURU NANAK DEV MISSION SERIES 287

THE ACCORD GOES PHUT

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Sri Ganga Nagar

Please read yourself and distribute its copies to
enable others to know how the wind blows

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Sikhs being the smallest minority community in India and their sacrifices for freedom of the country being the largest, Indian National Congress and its high-ups like Mahatma Gardhi and Pt. Nehru were committed to grant them in independent India, special rights and 'an area and a set up in the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom'. For over thirty years Sikhs looked up to them in vain for honouring their commitments and at last in 1976 they passed the Anandpur Sahib resolution calling upon the ruling Congress party to fulfil their promises. But that was not heeded to and the Sikhs had no course left to them except a non-violent passive resistance by launching a Morcha in 1982. Over two lakh people offered themselves for arrest and a good many of them were killed but the ruling congress remained adamant. Rather it thought of 'teaching the Sikhs a lesson' and consequently they desecrated and demolished their most sacred temples, burnt their scriptures (Holy Granth Sahib) in thousands, besides all historical and traditional records, removed their valuable relics and above all else killed in thousands their men, women and children in the very precincts of their holiest place of worship. Hundreds of their youth were killed in false police encounters. All this happened in June, 84.

Still not satisfied with that, in November, 1984 Sikh youths were massacred and burnt alive in an organised and preplanned manner in thousands in Delhi and all other congress-ruled states, young girls were raped and the elderly Sikhs were humiliated by shaving their heads and beards. Their properties worth billions were looted and their houses, shops and vehicles burnt and all this 'to teach them a lesson'. The whole of Punjab was a prohibited area and every young Sikh particularly the Amrit-dharis were declared terrorists to be shot at sight.

Then came the so-called healing touch that culminated in July, 1985 in the 'Punjab Accord' signed by the Prime Minister and the Morcha dictator Sant Longowal. Most of the Punjabis, who had suffered during these years especially the year 1984 welcomed the Accord, but as the writer of this article puts it the 'Accord goes Phut'. Readers will see for themselves how a common non-political Sikh feels about it.

Secretary

THE 'ACCORD' GOES PHUT, IS IT NOT ?

The 24 July last Accord co-signed by Bhai Sahib Harchand Singh (Sant) with the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Shiromani Akali Dal (L), was the culmination of the Dharam Yudh Morcha. The Morcha was started by the Akali Dal (L) under the dictatorship of Bhai Sahib 'Longowal', as President of his Dal, on 4th August, 1982 and was finally dropped or withdrawn on 26th July, 1985 at Sri Anandpur Sahib in a stormy meeting of his Dal.

Although two of the top brass of his Dal High Command registered clear dissenting notes in the Meeting, yet Longowal presiding, and together with S. Balwant Singh commending the Accord to the Dal's elected representatives former M.Ps., M.L.As., S.G.P.C. Members, District Jathedars etc. for adoption, saying the Dal's demands had been conceded by the Prime Minister, had claimed it was unanimously approved by the meeting.

Badal-Tohra's Dissenting Notes

Quoting extensively from a Reportage in the "Now's Issue" for August, 85-a 'Newsweek' Publication of New Delhi-1 (pp. 16, 17) Sardars Badal-Tohra dissents are noted here below :—

S. BADAL—'Only truth can be spoken at this Holy Place (i.e. Sri Anandpur Sahib), where our party is being

held. I differ with the views expressed by my learned friend Balwant Singh and I cannot approve them. We have lost our wealth, our religion and honour and despite this we have held our talks with those who demolished our temples. Out of about 12,000 sikh Army Personnel, who deserted when the Army attacked Sri Darbar Sahib complex, only 20 could be resettled as per the Accord. He expressed dissatisfaction over the extension of Inquiry into the November brutal killing (massacre) of Sikhs because he felt its scope was limited and that it did not refer to the criminals who perpetrated atrocities on Sikhs. He described the territorial commissions as deceptive which, he felt, could deliver judgement against the interest of Punjab. He went on to say that Anandpur Sahib Resolution (which was the pivot of the whole Dharam Yudh Morcha-H. S.) was not to be changed as had been announced. Our mission to Delhi should have been to get our demands accepted and not to appear before the Commissions.'

S. TOHRA—(Who spoke next to Longowal ji) said, 'the Accord was a negation of the demands of the Akali Dal (L). He explained we had demanded special rights for Punjab in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, but only the part dealing with State-Centre relations had been referred to Sarkaria Commission. He also drew the attention of the house to the pre-conditions laid down for talks on July 8 last (i.e. only a fortnight before the Accord of July 24) (and also by the Dal on Hola Mohalla Festival last March this year—H.S.) He had said that the invitation for talks will not be accepted unless the pre-conditions were accepted. He further stressed that the dignity of the Sikhs could not

be restored unless the Government announced general Amnesty for all Army Deserters and thousands arrested. Those who defended the Golden Temple from the 'Invaders' could not be forgotten. The Accord is not an achievement but 'ruination'. "Sant might be Dictator of the Morcha but the decision to accept or not to accept lies with the Akali Dal'.

Both Badal and Tohra voiced general Sikh opinion at the 26th July, 1985 meeting. But neither of them seems to have stuck to their guns, thereby downgrading their own status of a 'Leader'.

Why this Posthumous Assessment of the Accord ?

In view of the sky-high boost given to the 'Accord' on Punjab, it may be of little avail to attempt its post-mortem, particularly by an Octagenarian, absolutely non-political and non-partisan Sikh like the Scribe. Yet who can deny, destiny of every Sikh individual, for good or bad, is linked up with it, virtually a 'package deal' in the name of the Panth.

The Sant is sadly no more with us. However we may deplore it, to him now we respect. He has passed into the realm of Sikh History now. But the legacy of the 'Accord' which he has left to the Community will for the present, continue to affect its multifarious ups and downs, so far apparently the latter. Whatever inadequacies in the terms covenanted, as rightly pointed out by Messrs Badal and Tohra, quoted above, one cannot as yet confide in the bonafides of DELHI for sincere implementation even

thereof. Any such lapses which seem to have surfaced by now, the Akali Dal (L) and its Barnala Ministry will be hard put to take or keep Sikhs as a whole into their confidence.

Barnala & Balwant Singh's Self Confession

For instance, although trying to make Sikhs to believe in the sincerity of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, S. Balwant Singh has already disclosed more than once, a serious *Ghala Mala* regarding some added terms of reference for the Mathew Commission favouring Haryana to grab Fazilka and Abohar, originally agreed to be beyond the Commission's purview. He calls it a bid of some top class Home Ministry Bureaucrats' sabotging the 'Accord' in concert With the Haryana Chief Minister. (Ref. "Indian Express" of 7 Nov., p. 7). And after Mathewpanel's clear cut stand that transfer of areas has got to be only from Abohar, Fazilka (Ref. 'Indian Express' of 25 Nov., P. 1), is there any doubt left about virtually a settled fact in this respect? And is it not astonishingly intriguing, why both Sardars Barnala and Balwant Singh should feel shy of approaching P.M. Rajiv Gandhi himself, instead of beating about the bush, blaming his subordinates for 'SABOTAGE'. And earlier on 6 Sept, (Tribune 13 Sept. p. 9), the latter is reported to claim a share in the Thien Dam Project also, in addition to have already acquired the right on S. Y. L. Canal. In case of this canal even, one wonders, why the Akali Dal launched the Kapuri Morcha? Just to befool the Community? And C. M. Barnala offers to defuse the stir in certain badly affected villages in Ropar

District, without countering Haryana's malafides in laying claim to Fazilka and Abohar.

There is another query. Did the Congress (I) M.L.As. support Barnala Government's stand regarding Fazilka and Abohar case Vs. Haryana ? They did not. Could this all be without P.M's knowledge, rather connivance ?

(b) The other day, C. M. Barnala is reported to have himself pointed out in the C. M.S' NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, presided over by the P. M., that "Apart from some lingering cynicism about the Punjab Settlement by the Opposition, in certain sections, some new anxieties, fears and doubts have also arisen about the faithful implementation of the Agreement". Now who is there to allay these doubts, except P. M. Rajiv himself ? Has he done it sofar, despite his patting Barnala on his speech to P. Ms. liking in the N. D. C. on 9 Nov. ? S. Balwant Singh as well expressed in the Vidhan Sabha on 5 Nov. his having noted with regret that cracks have appeared in the implementation of the Punjab Accord (Ref. IBID) S. Balwant Singh's interview with the press in New Delhi on 22 Nov. (Ref. Express of 25 Nov. P. 6) is even more explicit on the point.

(C) Reference to Sarkaria Commission—A Hoax ?

The Dharam Yudh Morcha starting on 4th August, 1982 and ending on 26th July, 1985, cost the panth about a lakh of precious lives, domolition and desecration of scores of sacred historic shrines, hundreds of other gurdawaras, billions of rupees worth moveable and immovable Sikh properties etc. etc. To crown all, it divested the whole

Panth of all sense of human dignity and long built traditional pride, besides Longowal Ji's striking a very poor unstudied frivolous balance sheet, as pointed out above by Badal and Tohra, in return for the Panth's above noted Himalayan Investment, is very very flimsy achievement and that is also being sabotaged and jeopardized, as confessed by none else except Barnala and Balwant Singh, both co-architects of the Accord, and Hence the only ones accountable to the community after Longowal Ji.

Besides all this, Sri Anandpur Sahib Resolution its fulfilment in letter and spirit, was the only pivot of the costly morcha. Only a few days before co-signing the settlement, Longowal ji himself had publicly declared that Anandpur Sahib resolution was non-negotiable".

But in the 'Accord' he accepted only the State-Centre relationship item to be referred to the Sarkaria Commission.

(C-2) Position of this Commission

Let us probe a little into the Commission credence. As per a note in the 'Now' monthly's August last issue, P. 74, it has been hitherto of little account to the Centre and States. If at all it is there, it is to be utilised by New Delhi to endorse states absolute subordination to it (Ref. PT.'s note in the Express of 21st October, 1985, p.1)

(C-3) River Water Tribunal also in Jeopardy

Delhi is understood to have urged the speedy implementation of the remaining conditions of the accord. For this apparently Commission for ascertaining the transferring of Punjabi speaking areas from Haryana, will have to wait

until after Mathew panel's award. This is also intriguing in view of its already declared clear pro-Haryana stand, as per terms fixed by Mr. Arun Nehru M.P.

As for riverwater tribunal, the Irrigation Minister has made it incumbent on Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan to agree to the annulment of Madam Indira Gandhi's award of 31st Dec. 1981 in this matter, and then all the three states consenting for the fresh tribunal (Ref. Express of 25th November. 1985, p. 9). But Haryana is not likely to seek the appointing of the New Tribunal (Ref. Express of 23rd Nov., 1985 p. 1).

Thus implementation of this item of the accord is also doubtful.

(d) Misra Commission—An Eye Wash

Like Sarkaria Commission's hoax, the Misra Inquiry Commission for investigating into the Delhi etc. Massacre of Sikhs, is also an eye wash. For instance, in its own words, besides its conducting its task in a care-free, tardy fashion, its terms of reference are 'To probe into the causes of Riots and violence and to suggest as to how such incidents could have been prevented' (Ref. P.T.I.'s report in the 'Tribune of 22nd September. 1985 P. 15).

Thus, is there any question of awarding deterrent, exemplary punishments to the real guilty as listed in the 'Who are the guilty ?' booklet in its annexure IV ? Hence, is the Misra Commission not a mere eye wash, which Longowal Ji claimed one of his achievements ?

in this matter too, therefore, how could an agony and anguish in every genuine sikh heart be silenced, sense of human dignity and feeling of security be restored? And very many victims still passing their miserable days in make shift refugee camps, are still running from pillar to post for their reasonable rehabilitation. For instance, 'Express' Report in its 15 Nov. issue p. 4 captioned "Living with lingering Trauma, is a still more hair raising account.

In the absence of such a just treatment as pointed out above, could it be a wrong presumption of any conscious, community-committed member of the Sikh fraternity, that the unwary Sikhs still living in Delhi—and other States outside Punjab, are coaxed to stay put in their domiciles, as virtual hostages, as a ready human material for a repetition of such carnage to still more 'teach a thorough lesson to the Panth Khalsa', reducing it to an absolute straw of the street? In this context a new scourge of Lucknow—based 'Bajrang Brigade' (Ref. Spokesman, Guru Nanak Number, p. 8) is still more closely noteworthy by every Sikh in India and abroad.

Cause for such an apprehension is quite apparent: onelike awarding the 'War Heroes' of 'Operation Blue Star', right from Lt. General K. Sunderji (Express of 8 Nov. p. 8) downwards, there has been a major move for the wholesale promotions of 'Police Heroes' of the Delhi Massacre (Ref. Indian Express, 11 Nov. p. 3).

SECOND—As per a recent press report (Express of 8 Nov. p. 7), there is a mad rush in Delhi to buy small

sophisticated imported Arms, sold by 'National Trade Corporation' at considerable subsidized rates, presumably for training in self defence purpose. Which community could have got a priority to acquire these weapons, any body could guess it.

(e) Any Deserters' Concession also a Joke

Apart from what Badal has said about it in this context, the foremost Champions (Barnala and Bulwant Singh) of the Longowal-Rajiv Accord, must feel called upon to also read through the details of the harsh punishments given to 349 Army men by the Court Martial at Suratgarh, (District Sri Ganganagar of Rajasthan), to the so-called deserters of 9 Sikh Regiment at Lalgarh (Ganganagar) (Ref. 'Punjabi Tribune 22nd Oct. 1985 Report, P. 3).

(f) Crush Terrorists !

In addition to all this, can any community-conscious Sikhs fail to take note of gruesome implications of the P.M.'S "Crush the (so called) 'Terrorists and Extremists in Punjab (Ref. P.T.I.'s Report of 6 Nov. "The Express Dt. 7th Nov. 1985, P. 1) being the burden of every public utterance of his regarding Punjab? Evidently, he is mounting pressure on the Barnala Ministry to execute this heinous job.

Reading through a Press Report of C. M. Sardar Barnala's interview with Mr. Arun Nehru, P. M.'s right hand man in his cabinet (Ref. Express 18 Nov., p. 1), leaves little doubt in this context, as well as, Centr's reluctance in implementing Accord's item 4 regarding the so-called Army Deserters.

AND OF WHAT AVAIL IT WOULD BE AKALI MINISTRY'S presenting its case to the Sarkaria Commission (Ref. Express 17th Nov. 1985, p. 7) in the face of Cong. (I)'s above noted forceful case, being submitted to this commission to insure total subordination of states to the Centre, is any body's guess.

(f-3) **State Terrorism**

In this context, could one humbly request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to be graciously pleased to publicly clarify what a trifling comparison does his concept of terrorism bear to the state's extremism against innocent Sikhs in Punjab and elsewhere ? (Ref, CFD'S studied survey report, entitled, "Report to the Nation, Operation Punjab") will he be also pleased, in the name of 'Satyamev Jayate' (let truth prevail) to remove ban on its publication ?

The Finish with a plea to the Akali Dal (L)

Of course, there are several more facts for further elaboration of the theme under reference. But the scribe ends this short note for the sake of brevity, but with a plea to the Akali Dal (L). As made out above, the Longowal-Rajiv Accord warrants a whole panth's review and Revision in a world-wide fresh panthic convention held at Sri Akal Takhat, under the joint auspices of all the factions functioning in the name of different Akali Dals. In this Panthic convention, besides deliberating on a number of other Panthic exigencies in the modern context, some different equations vis-a-vis Delhi of an abiding nature, needs also be formulated, for the sake of rendering as best a service of the Khalasite genius, to our cherished Mother India, as our illustrious Martyr forbears have done Humbly.

—At the feet of Panth Khalsa and all righteous sages.
Hari Singh.

About Ourselves

Guru Nanak Dev Mission came into being in the year 1963 with the sole aim of imparting the message of Sikh Gurus to general public, and especially to the people of younger generation. For this end in view it provides reading material in the form of booklets, everymonth, in Punjabi, English, and Hindi.

The Mission is a non-profit organisation. None of its workers or executive members is a paid employee. Accordingly the booklets are made available for free distribution at mere cost price. Members of the Mission get these free of charge.

The life membership fee is Rs 125/—in India and Rs. 250/— abroad for surface mail service and Rs 450/— for Air mail. Annual subscription at home is Rs 12/—only. At least 18 Publications are mailed annually, By now i. e. January 1986 the Mission has published 287 booklets. Besides following publications of the Mission. are available for sale & can be had from its office in Sanaur :

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2. One Guru One Movement by late Bhai
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Secretary